AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1.63. (Canceled)

64. (New) A device for improving heart valve function, the device comprising:

a first anchoring member;

a second anchoring member;

a flexible member configured to connect the first and second anchoring member, the flexible member being further configured to be positioned adjacent an external surface of a heart wall; and

at least one protrusion configured to be positioned in contact with an external surface of the heart wall such that the at least one protrusion exerts an inward force against the heart wall proximate a valve,

wherein the inward force is sufficient to alter valve function.

65. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the at least one protrusion protrudes from the flexible member.

66. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the at least one protrusion is configured to exert an inward force sufficient to draw leaflets of the valve together.

67. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the anchoring members are configured to secure the device to the heart.

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68. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the flexible member is configured to be selectively adjustable so as to alter relative positions between at least one of the first and second anchors and the protrusion.

69. (New) The device of claim 68, wherein the flexible member is configured to be selectively lockable relative to the at least one first anchor, second anchor, and protrusion.

70. (New) The device of claim 69, further comprising at least one pin associated with the at least one first anchor, second anchor, and protrusion and configured to penetrate the flexible member so as to selectively lock the flexible member to the at least one first anchor, second anchor, and protrusion.

71. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the flexible member is made of a plurality of filaments.

72. (New) The device of claim 71, wherein the filaments form a braided structure.

73. (New) The device of claim 64, further comprising an elongate member configured to extend transverse a heart chamber and be secured to the heart via the first and second anchors.

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74. (New) The device of claim 64, wherein the valve is a mitral valve.

75. (New) A method for improving heart valve function, the method comprising:

providing a device comprising a first anchoring member, a second anchoring member, a flexible member connecting the first and second anchoring members, and at least one protrusion between the first and second anchoring members;

positioning the flexible member adjacent an external surface of a heart wall; and

positioning the at least one protrusion in contact with an external surface of the heart wall such that the at least one protrusion exerts an inward force against the heart wall proximate a valve, wherein the inward force is sufficient to alter valve function.

76. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein the inward force is sufficient to draw leaflets of the valve together.

77. (New) The method of claim 76, wherein the valve leaflets define a line of coaptation and positioning the protrusion includes positioning the protrusion such that the inward force is exerted substantially orthogonal to the line of coaptation.

78. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein the valve is a mitral valve.

79. (New) The method of claim 75, further comprising adjusting a position of the device while observing the valve function.

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80. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein the inward force is exerted on an annulus of the valve.

81. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein the inward force is sufficient to reposition papillary muscles of the valve.

82. (New) The method of claim 75, further comprising positioning the device outside the epicardium of the heart.

83. (New) The method of claim 82, further comprising attaching the device to the epicardium.

84. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein the inward force is exerted throughout the cardiac cycle.

85. (New) The method of claim 75, further comprising selectively adjusting the flexible member so as to alter relative positions between at least one of the first and second anchoring members and the protrusion.

86. (New) The method of claim 85, further comprising selectively locking the flexible member to the at least one first anchoring member, second anchoring member, and protrusion.

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87. (New) The method of claim 86, wherein at least one pin is associated with the at least one first anchoring member, second anchoring member, and protrusion and the method further comprises penetrating the flexible member with the pin so as to selectively lock the flexible member to the at least one first anchoring member, second anchoring member, and protrusion.

88. (New) The method of claim 75, wherein providing the device further comprises providing an elongate member configured to extend transverse a heart chamber and be secured to the heart via the first and second anchoring members.

89. (New) The method of claim 88, further comprising positioning the first and second anchoring members adjacent first and second heart wall portions substantially opposite each other and drawing the first and second heart wall portions toward each other.

90. (New) A device for improving heart valve function, the device comprising:

a first anchor configured to be secured to heart tissue;

a second anchor configured to be secured to heart tissue; and

an interconnecting member connecting the first anchor and the second anchor,

wherein the interconnecting member is configured to be selectively adjustable so as to alter a tension of the interconnecting member between the first anchor and the second anchor, and

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wherein at least a portion of the interconnecting member is configured to be positioned exterior to a heart chamber proximate a valve such that the device exerts an inward force on the heart wall sufficient to alter the valve function.

91. (New) The device of claim 90, wherein the interconnecting member is flexible.

92. The device of claim 90, wherein the interconnecting member is made of a plurality of filaments.

93. The device of claim 92, wherein the plurality of filaments form a braided structure.

94. The device of claim 90, wherein the interconnecting member is configured to be adjustably connected to at least one of the first and second anchors.

95. The device of claim 94, wherein the interconnecting member is configured to be selectively lockable relative to at least one of the first and second anchors.

96. The device of claim 95, further comprising a pin configured to selectively penetrate the interconnecting member so as to selectively lock the interconnecting member to at least one of the first and second anchors.

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97. The device of claim 94, wherein the interconnecting member is configured to be adjustably connected to the first anchor and to the second anchor.

98. The device of claim 90, wherein the first anchor and the second anchor are configured to be secured to an epicardial layer of the heart.

99. The device of claim 90, further comprising at least one protrusion connected to the interconnecting member and configured to be positioned between the first anchor and the second anchor.

100. (New) The device of claim 90, further comprising an elongate member configured to extend transverse the heart chamber and be secured to the heart via the first and second anchors.

101. (New) A method for improving heart valve function, the method comprising:

providing a device comprising a first anchor configured to be secured to heart tissue, a second anchor configured to be secured to heart tissue, and an interconnecting member connecting the first anchor and the second anchor; and

positioning at least a portion of the interconnecting member exterior to a heart chamber proximate a valve such that the device exerts an inward force on the heart sufficient to alter the valve function,

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wherein the interconnecting member is configured to be selectively adjustable so as to alter a tension of the interconnecting member between the first anchor and the second anchor.

102. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein the inward force is sufficient to draw leaflets of the valve together.

103. (New) The method of claim 102, wherein the valve leaflets define a line of coaptation and positioning the portion of the interconnecting member includes positioning the portion such that the inward force is exerted substantially orthogonal to the line of coaptation.

104. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein the valve is a mitral valve.

105. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein the inward force is exerted on an annulus of the valve.

106. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein the inward force is sufficient to reposition papillary muscles of the valve.

107. (New) The method of claim 101, further comprising positioning the device outside the epicardium of the heart.

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108. (New) The method of claim 101, further comprising selectively adjusting the tension of the interconnecting member.

109. (New) The method of claim 101, further comprising adjusting a relative position of the first and second anchors so as to adjust the tension in the interconnecting member.

110. (New) The method of claim 109, further comprising selectively locking the interconnecting member to at least one of the first anchor and the second anchor after adjusting the relative position.

111. (New) The method of claim 110, wherein the selectively locking includes penetrating the interconnecting member with a pin.

112. (New) The method of claim 101, further comprising securing the first anchor and the second anchor to an epicardial layer of the heart.

113. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein providing the device further comprises providing an elongate member configured to extend transverse the heart chamber and secured to the heart via the first and second anchors.

114. (New) The method of claim 101, further comprising exerting the inward force on the heart wall throughout a cardiac cycle.

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115. (New) The method of claim 101, wherein providing the device includes providing a device comprising at least one protrusion connected to the interconnecting member and disposed between the first anchor and the second anchor.

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